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BONING LAMB CUTS

A radio interview between Miss Lucy M. Alexander, Bureau of Home Economics and K. F. Warner, Bureau of Animal Industry broadcast from Station WRC and 34 other stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, April 4, 1930.

MISS ALEXANDER:

Since our recent radio talks many of you homemakers have asked us questions about the boning of lamb cuts. All these cuts we have told you about were boned by Mr. Warner, so today he has come to tell us how he does it. Incidentally, Mr. Warner has admitted that though boning meat is really a man's job, women can do most of it, on the smaller cuts at least. It is true that more and more boning of meat cuts is being done by the retail meat dealers these days, but even so you may have trouble in finding on the market Mr. Warner's cushion shoulder of lamb which we like so much better than the ordinary rolled kind. We call it a cushion because it looks so plump and square when stuffed and roasted. So whether you are interested in doing the boning yourself or in telling your husband or your meat dealer how to do it, I am sure you will be glad to hear Mr. Warner tell how simple and easy it is to remove the bones from some of the lamb cuts.

MR. WARNER:

First I would like to say a word about the convenience of serving or carving boneless cuts. Graceful carving is no small part of any successful meal and such carving ordinarily requires both skill and practice. It would be interesting to know how many of you folks possess a really expert carver in your family - one who can perform his task smoothly and with even temper.

One of the advantages of boneless roasts is that even the inexperienced can carve them nicely. The use of boned cuts reduces carving from the uncertain pinnacle of a dramatic art to the broad level of an accomplished virtue.

This is particularly true of a lamb shoulder. Taking out the bone changes the problem of the carver from one of higher mathematics to simple first-grade arithmetic. All he has to do is to cut enough slices to go around.

For boning meat, one should have a sharp knife with a narrow blade about 1/2 inch wide and 4 or 5 inches long. May I add a word of warning here. Out of my experience and that of many, many others, a good well-sharpened knife will prove of little service if it is permitted to bang around in the kitchen drawers with the other knives and forks. I have seen one housewife, whom I know quite well, peeling hot potatoes with a finely tempered knife and I have seen one of the younger generation using the same instrument for digging dandelions. Even a knife that has been skillfully sharpened can not survive such treatment. For boning, the knife must be in good condition so that it will slide easily along the surface of the bone, cut free the muscle, slip down into the joints and cut the sinews and tendons without gashing.

(over)

MISS ALEXANDER:

All right, Mr. Warner, we'll take your advice about the sharp knife. Where shall we start to make a cushion shoulder of lamb?

MR. WARNER:

It is a simple matter to bone the lamb shoulder "cushion style" as you call it. Lamb shoulder, as cut for the retail trade, is almost as square and plump as a cushion. It contains four or five ribs, the shoulder blade, the round arm bone, and part of the neck. To bone it lay the shoulder flat on the table with the fat side down and the rib side up. First, slip the knife under the edges of the ribs and follow down along them to the neck bone. You doubtless know the reason for the name spare ribs in pork and lamb ribs should be made just as spare, leaving as much meat on the shoulder as possible. Cut the ribs and the neck bones from the meat. Inside the shoulder there still remain the blade bone and the short end of the arm. The flat blade and the round shank bone form a sort of ell that extends through the center of the shoulder. The edge of the blade bone can be seen on the rear, or shall we say the right side of the shoulder, and the arm bone or bottom of the ell on the side toward you. Slip the knife deep into the meat along the top or smooth side of the shoulder blade. Continue the cut around the right-hand corner to the shank bone, raising a flap of lean meat that can be laid back far enough to expose the full length of the bones. The method is similar to the way most housewives identify the napkin of a house guest who is to be there for a second meal. You've seen her pick up the open corner of the napkin and fold it back. A flap open on two sides and closed on the other two. Peel out the shoulder blade and round shank bone. You now have a cushion of meat open on two adjacent sides with a fine large pocket to hold a tasty stuffing. Whether roasted with or without stuffing, sew the edges of the pocket together before cooking.

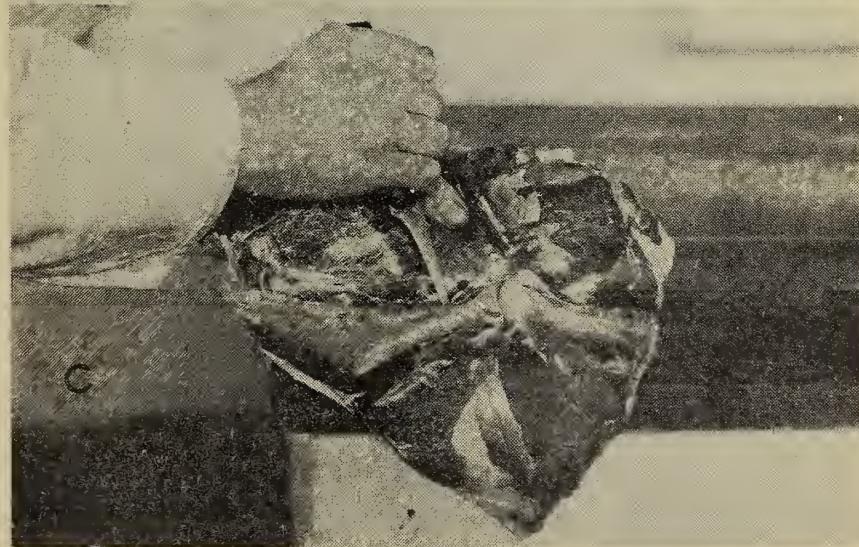
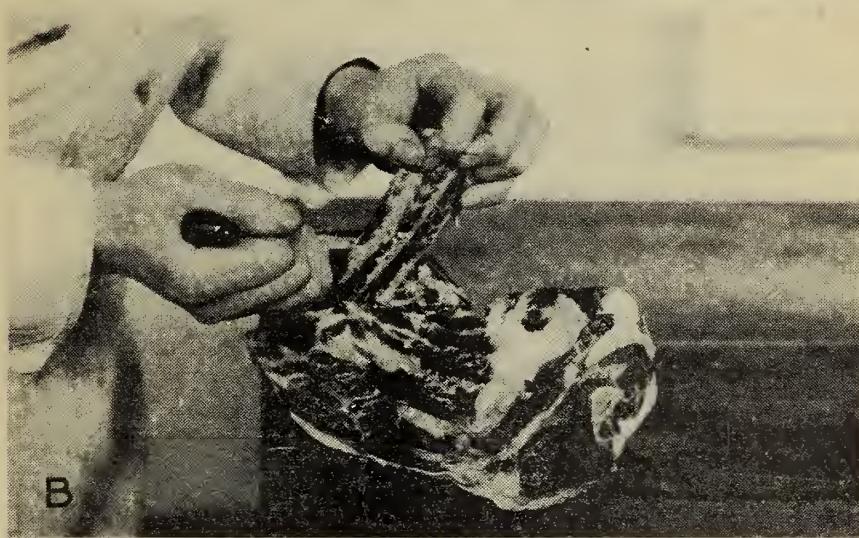
MISS ALEXANDER:

With those clear directions, I think any of us can bone a shoulder of lamb. Now, Mr. Warner, will you tell us how to bone the thick loin chops which are so popular for spring luncheons and dinners?

MR. WARNER:

Yes, that is a very simple thing to do. With your sharp, narrow-bladed knife, cut close to the little T-bones in the loin chops and take them out. Wrap the flank end or tail around the solid meat center and skewer together firmly with toothpicks. This is for the split loin. Or, you may do better than this and have double chops cut clear across the unsplit loin. Two miniature T-bone steaks as it were, with the tops of the T's joined together. It is just as easy to cut around these bones as the single T-bone and the double chop is very special indeed.

PLATE I - Boning A Lamb Shoulder.



A - Unboned lamb shoulder. B - Removing ribs from shoulder. C - Lamb shoulder opened "cushion" style to make the pocket and permit removal of blade and arm bones.



MISS ALEXANDER:

It seems so easy, Mr. Warner, could we not bone the entire loin and make a rolled saddle roast?

MR. WARNER:

Yes, it is just a little matter of time and patience, and do not forget the sharp knife. Boned and stuffed, the saddle is one of the finest roasts.

MISS ALEXANDER:

One more, Mr. Warner. How about leg of lamb, would you bone it?

MR. WARNER:

We always bone a leg of lamb at home. It is surprising how many attractive servings can be made from either a hot or cold boned leg that can be sliced evenly from end to end. In boning, take out the irregular aitch or pelvic bone at the large end. Cut into the meat on the thinnest or stifle side and lay back a flap of meat deep enough to expose the bone and permit its removal. You will have a pocket here for stuffing too, or the leg may be sewed together and roasted without stuffing.

Anybody can carve a roast like that. Moreover, you can do it so quickly that you will have an opportunity to enjoy a few bites yourself before the boys come back for second helpings.

PLATE II - Boning a Lamb Loin Chop



A



B

A - Loin chop, showing outline of the inverted "T" bone. B - Boned loin chop and method of skewering.

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